

Operationalizing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from a Community Perspective

Allison Matson, Assistant Village Manager



FLOSSMOOR

Welcoming. Beautiful. Connected.

- ***Branding and Strategic Planning***
- ***Community Relations Commission***
- ***Community Outreach and Engagement***



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Our Community

Demographics

- **62.1% Black or African American**
34.2% White
2.2% Asian
1.1% Two or More Races
- **Hispanic or Latino: 3.2%**
- **English Only: 94.9%**
- **Median Household Income: \$115,000**

2019 American Community Survey Estimates



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2017 Branding and Strategic Planning

- **Concurrent Projects with Two Outside Consultants**
- **Sought Community Input Through Surveys and In-Person Sessions**
- **Confirmed What We Heard Anecdotally**



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Why do I choose to live/work in Flossmoor?

Diversity – not to be the only African-American child in school

What are Flossmoor's strengths—what do we offer residents or businesses that no other community can?

The combination of value, community, diversity, arts, schools

What are Flossmoor's weaknesses—the biggest challenges we face as a community?

Community tension

Disconnect among people

Lack of opportunities to connect

White flight

Village commissions don't represent the diversity of Flossmoor – west side not represented

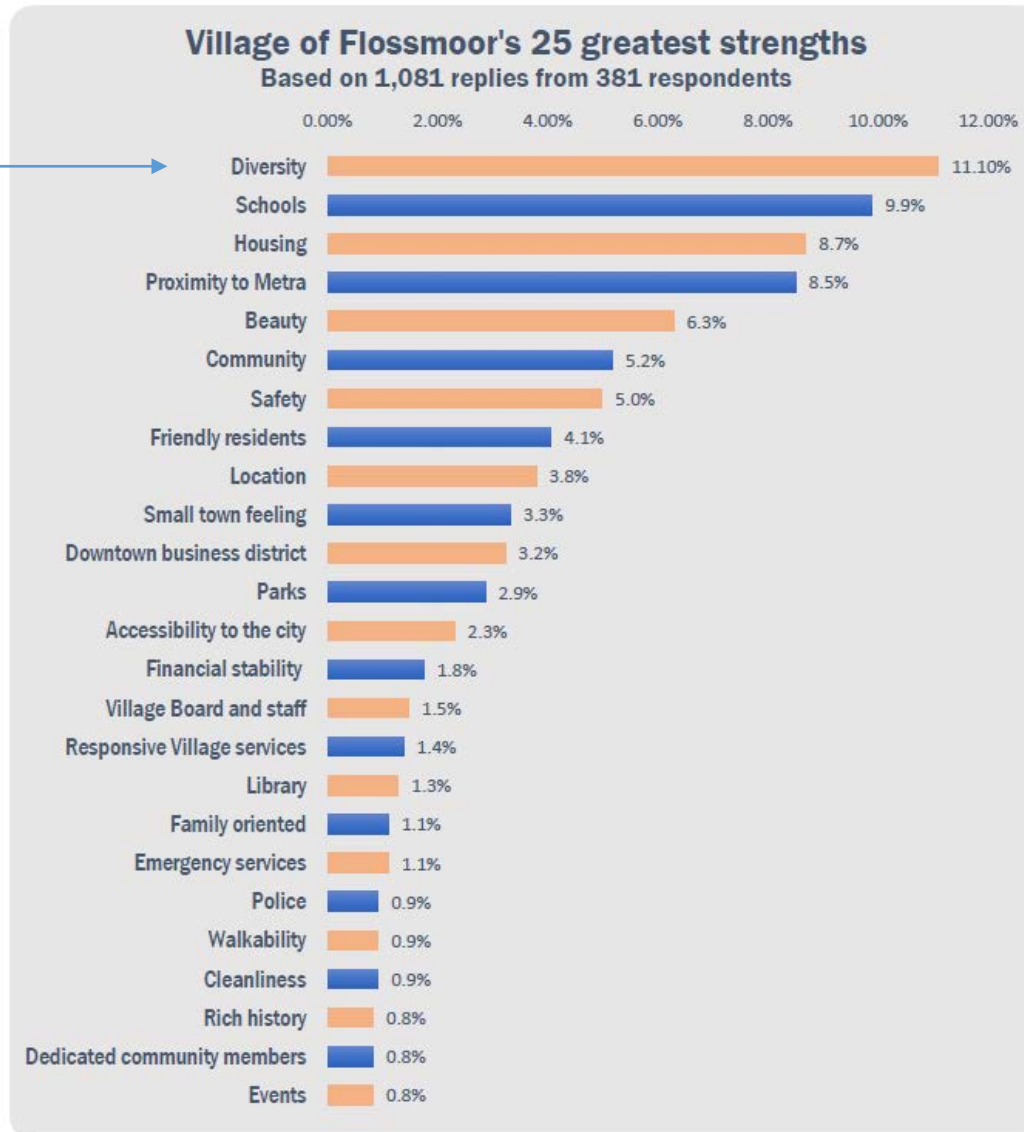
Get residents involved

Why do people leave Flossmoor?

Don't want diversity



Greatest strengths





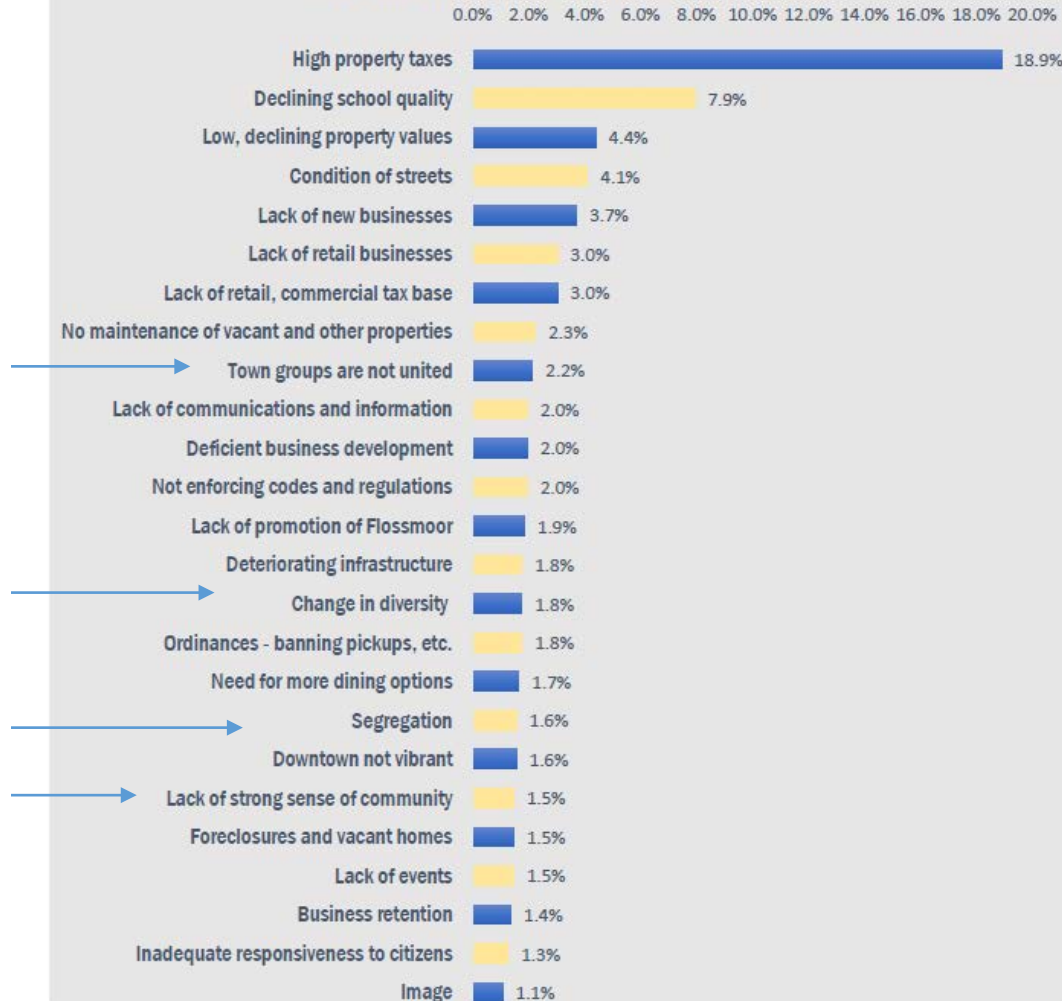
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Greatest weaknesses

Village of Flossmoor's 25 greatest weaknesses

Based on 1,009 replies from 380 respondents



How We Used That Information

Branding

- Tagline Includes Welcoming
- Public-Facing Communications Include Actual Residents
- Thoughtful Social Media Presence – What Gets Posted Where

Strategic Planning

- Included Diversity & Inclusion as a Strategic Priority
- Identified Areas of Emphasis
 - Training
 - Hiring/Staffing
 - Purchasing
 - Community Events
- Will Be Asking in 2021 Survey if We've Made Progress

Newsletters



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ERNOON IN FLOSSMOOR

Marketing



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MORE LIKE
home

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A HIDDEN GEM, WITH BEST-IN-CLASS SCHOOLS, ONE-OF-A-KIND ARCHITECTURE, JUST A HOP-SKIP FROM THE CITY. WHAT MORE COULD YOU WANT?

FIND YOUR MORE — DISCOVERFLOSSMOOR.COM

MORE TO *life*

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Community Relations Commission

- **Group of Nine Residents Thoughtfully Appointed – Geographically and Racially Diverse**
 - **3 Black Women, Three Black Men, One Asian-American Woman, One White Man, One White Woman**
- **Enabling Ordinance: Act as a Conduit Between Residents and Village; Study Issues of Regional Diversity**
- **Actual Role Has Ebbled and Flowed Over 20 Years**



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Community Relations Commission Through the Years

- **Studied Ways to Avoid Becoming A Segregated Community by Neighborhood, Stem Tide of White Flight and Market Diversity as an Asset**
- **Sponsored Community Events to Bring Neighbors Together, like Movies in the Park**
- **Started Annual New Resident Welcome Event**
- **Sponsor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service**

Community Relations Commission in Past Four Years

- **Developed Guiding Principles of Diversity & Inclusion**
e.g. a Vision Statement for DEI
- **Formalized Their Intent to Break Down Barriers to Inclusion**
- **Act as a Resource for Incidents/Issues Around Race**
- **Continue to Develop Activities and Strategies to Connect Community Members**

Adopted Guiding Principals for Diversity and Inclusion



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Guiding Principles for Diversity & Inclusion

Shared Values

The Village of Flossmoor is energized by diversity in all its forms and is welcoming to families of all descriptions. The village recognizes that the definition of diversity itself should be broad and inclusive, including diversity of religion, gender, sexuality, family, age, culture, and race. The Village seeks to promote a community that is accepting, respectful and welcoming to all.

Representation

People of diverse backgrounds need to be included and represented in government. The Village's resident volunteer commissions should have members who represent different neighborhoods and backgrounds. The Village's diversity should be displayed in marketing materials and communications.

Communication and Connections

The Village of Flossmoor seeks to encourage dialogue both with its residents and among its residents, providing opportunities for all residents' voices to be heard. The Village will encourage, and in some cases, facilitate, or work with community partners, to facilitate communications within neighborhoods. To this end, the Village's objective is to connect residents to each other and their government in a way that makes them feel valued.

Access

The Village's programs and services should operate in a way that is fair and equitable. Services and community resources should be easily accessible. The Village will take concerns of discrimination seriously. The Village will encourage other government agencies in Flossmoor to promote these principles in their services and programs.

Events


Village programs and events should offer a variety of activities that celebrate all cultures and allow residents to celebrate diversity, become more united, and learn from each other.

PASSED this 20th day of AUGUST, 2018.

APPROVED:


Paul S. Braun, Mayor

ATTEST:


Joni Bradley-Scott, Village Clerk



Steps Developing to Guiding Principles

- **Asked the Question:**
What Does an Equitable and Inclusive Community Look Like to You?
- **Commissioners Wrote Their Answers Down on Post-Its Before Open Brainstorming**
- **Naturally Grouped into Five Areas:**
Shared Values, Representation, Communications and Connections, Access, Events

Steps Developing to Guiding Principles, Cont.

- **Worked with Board Members in Groups of Two**
- **Edited the Language for Board Approval Before Presenting Publicly**



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Lessons Learned and Recommendations

- **Not All CRC Members Were Comfortable – Impetus for Some to Step Down**
- **Easy to Slip into “Let’s Just Get Along” Language**
- **Conduct Training on Issues of Equity and Inclusion Before Starting**
- **Use the Document to Develop Strategies**



Four Areas of Focus

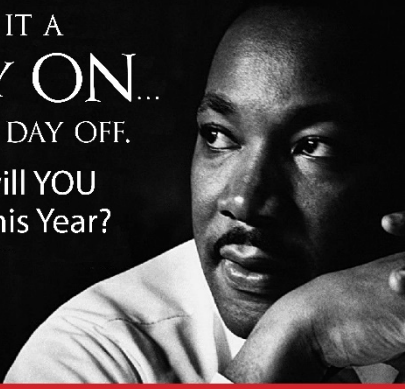
- Staff
 - Recruiting
 - Community College Program
- Vendors
 - Minority Supplier Databases
 - Bid “goals”
- Training
 - Implicit Bias
 - GARE
 - NLC REAL
- Special Events
 - Direct invites
 - Pins on a Map
 - Smaller events: Pride, Hispanic Heritage, One Book One Flossmoor



Community Engagement

- Strong Relationship with Schools
 - Share Communications Position with Elementary School District
 - Access to Communications with Parents
 - Regular Intergovernmental Meetings
 - Coordinated Response to Community Issues
- Expanded Presence with Neighborhood Associations
- Multi-Channel Communications
 - Direct Mail
 - Door Hangers
- Low-Cost Community Events

MAKE IT A
DAY ON...
 NOT A DAY OFF.
 Who will YOU
 Help this Year?



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. | **DAY OF SERVICE**
 AT-HOME EDITION, ALL MONTH LONG

Visit flossmoor.org to learn more about this year's opportunities.

SAVE *the* DATE
HOMWOOD-FLOSSMOOR
JUNETEENTH
FESTIVAL by YOU MATTER 2
 06 . 19 . 21
VENDOR APPLICATIONS
OPEN NOW!

To learn more visit:
www.youmatter2.org/vendors

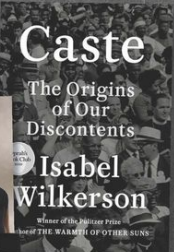


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Are You Reading?
 Join Our Next Virtual Book Club!
ONE BOOK, ONE FLOSSMOOR

Caste
The Origins of our Discontents
 by Pulitzer Prize winning author
 Isabel Wilkerson





Caste is a nonfiction book, published in 2020, that describes racism in the United States as an aspect of a caste system — a society-wide system of social stratification characterized by notions such as hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, and parity.

ONE BOOK, ONE FLOSSMOOR

The Flossmoor Community Relations Commission is once again partnering with the Flossmoor Public Library to sponsor. Our Virtual Book Club will begin on **January 1, 2021** with a discussion group on **February 18, 2021**. Because *Caste* is a new book, wait lists may be long at the Flossmoor Public Library. Copies of *Caste* can be purchased locally at Bookie's in Homewood or on Amazon.

Visit our website for more information about the book and to sign up for the Zoom discussion.

flossmoor.org


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Police Department Focus

- Pre-testing orientation
- Revising the weight on components of testing process
- Revising the interview questions
- Implicit bias training
- 2020 Protests
- Community programs & Partners: Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out, HFHS Intro to Law Class, HF Junior Vikings, Juneteenth





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Service Based on Equity

- Water Bill Forgiveness Program
- Free Parkway Trees
- Free Brush Pickup
- Free Leaf Pickup
- Geographical Distribution of Service: Street resurfacing and other infrastructure; amenities like sculpture



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When Good Intentions Turn Bad



<https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/homewood-flossmoor-students-walk-out-blackface-photos-509256421.html>



- Incidents stemming around race raise raw emotion
- The spectrum of “reasonable” response is wide.
- Social media
 - Difficult to monitor
 - Challenged by what to respond to
 - Creates movement that can be perceived as “out of control”
- Allowing your day to be interrupted and recognizing the importance of community leaders in these situations.

Community Response



HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR
Community High School
708-799-3000 • www.hfhighschool.org



PARENT FORUM:

A dialogue on recent events

TUESDAY, MAY 14
or
MONDAY, MAY 20

Introduction 7-7:30 p.m.
Small Groups 7:30-8:45 p.m.
Refreshments 8:45-9 p.m.

Mall Auditorium

Parents and guardians of **current** H-F High School students are invited to attend a special forum on either Tuesday, May 14, or Monday, May 20, in the school's South Building. The evening will begin in the Mall Auditorium. Parents will then participate in facilitator-led small group sessions in classrooms and will be invited to share concerns and contribute ideas regarding next steps.

- <https://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/daily-southtown/ct-sta-homewood-flossmoor-defends-response-st-0505-story.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E17IweZsqs8>
- HF Administration Question and Answer - Broadcast of six in-school question and answer sessions on Wednesday with Dr. Anderson, Dr. Mansfield, and three students. All students watched a session during English class, and were able to submit questions.
- Principal Anderson - Presentation during Peacology forum planning meeting - dispels rumors.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s1Hqez61ioU&fbclid=IwAR16vo2iYa7axJLZ5bJmIHNPuFI0dSswWJv3BOi9ZvdwvxAA5xHmCtLOF-g&app=desktop>



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What We Did and What We Learned

- Joint Mayoral Statement from Village of Homewood and Village of Flossmoor
- Called together an intergovernmental leadership meeting within the week with additional follow-up
- Turned to trusted advisors such as the Anti-Defamation League
- Encouraged and participated in community dialogue (i.e. Peaceology)
- Talked to people!
- Reached out to individuals influencing public opinion
- Taking a long-term view

***When it happens in your community,
own it and re-commit to your values***

Suggestions to Get Started



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- Use existing events to connect residents to each other and the city
 - Welcome booth
 - Get Connected card
 - Capture contact information
 - Sign up for e-news
- New Resident Open House
- Use residents as your photographers (#Flossmoor365)
- Examine who you have serving on commissions. Is it representative of the community and its geography? Do they share the community values?
- Survey residents (Survey Monkey)
- Tap into free or low cost resources
- Internal and external conversations to prepare for an incident

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QKclvTb3WY>

www.flossmoor.org